

to further support the crucial role of political regimes in health.

Besides the behavioural and structural approaches to explain health changes in post-communist countries an approach based in political epidemiology<sup>8</sup> could have explanatory meaning and public health relevance.

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## APHORISM OF THE MONTH .....

### Virchow misquoted, part-quoted, and the real McCoy

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's *Midweek* programme on 22 February 2006, Jonathon Kaplan quoted Virchow as saying that, "pathology is politics writ large". He seems to have been misquoting the usual part-quotation that, "Medicine is a social science and politics is nothing but medicine writ large". In fact, what Virchow *really* said was that, "Medicine is a social science and politics is nothing else but medicine on a large scale. Medicine as a social science, as the science of human beings, has the obligation to point out problems and to attempt their theoretical solution; the politician, the practical anthropologist, must find the means for their actual solution".<sup>1</sup>

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